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INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE 1701
RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 1770
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 1068
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RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2349
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 2667

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 04 ASTANA 001090

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, SCA/PPD, ISN

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MNUC](#) [SOCI](#) [KNNP](#) [KPAO](#) [KMDR](#) [RS](#) [KZ](#)

SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN: AMBASSADOR DELIVERS REMARKS AT EVENT
COMMEMORATING CESSATION OF NUCLEAR TESTING AT SEMIPALATINSK

¶1. SUMMARY: The Ambassador traveled to Semey on June 18 to participate in a ceremony marking the 20th anniversary of the cessation of Soviet nuclear tests at the Semipalatinsk test site. President Nazarbayev's speech at the event received heavy media coverage. He highlighted Kazakhstan's decision soon after independence to give up the nuclear arsenal it had inherited from the USSR, urged strengthening of the global non-proliferation regime, and called on the United Nations to make August 29 "World Non-Proliferation Day." (NOTE: The Semipalatinsk site was officially closed on August 29, 1991. END NOTE.) In his own remarks, the Ambassador recognized Kazakhstan's leadership on non-proliferation and drew on President Obama's Prague speech outlining U.S. policy to reduce the threat from nuclear weapons and materials. END SUMMARY.

CROWD OF OVER 10,000

¶2. The Kazakhstani government invited the heads of 14 diplomatic missions to travel to Semey on a special charter flight for the commemorative event. The Ambassador and Russian Ambassador Mikhail Bocharnikov were asked to deliver remarks. The Japanese and French ambassadors, and representatives from the British, South Korean, and Chinese embassies and UN mission attended. Six invited embassies did not send anyone -- specifically, India, Pakistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan. The event was also attended by a women's group from Japan and private citizens' groups from Belarus and the Ukraine, with many individuals carrying banners with slogans such as "world peace."

¶3. The commemoration drew a crowd of well over 10,000 people, according to media reports. President Nazarbayev sat at center stage, surrounded by community leaders, an imam, and individuals who had actually witnessed the early, above-ground nuclear tests at Semipalatinsk. The Ambassador, Russian Ambassador Bocharnikov, and Semey's akim (mayor) were seated closest to Nazarbayev.

PRAISE FOR NAZARBAYEV

¶4. Official, Russian-language "Kazakhstanskaya Pravda" called President Nazarbayev's trip to Semey "Mission for Peace 2009." The

backdrop for the event was the "Stronger than Death" monument, which was opened in 2001 in memory of the victims of radiation in the Semey area. On behalf of the people of Kazakhstan, Nazarbayev called on all countries that have nuclear capabilities to demonstrate responsibility and fulfill their international obligations. "Kazakhstan has an absolute historic and moral right to be a leader in the global anti-nuclear movement," he argued. Nazarbayev called on the United Nations to declare August 29 as the "international day of nuclear weapons abandonment." He also said that the world community should create a new universal treaty on "horizontal and vertical non-proliferation of nuclear weapons." Nazarbayev proposed prohibiting the improvement of existing nuclear arsenals in any form, in order to avoid a new nuclear arms race.

15. Pro-government, Russian-language "Liter" quotes Nazarbayev reflecting on the struggle to close the Semipalatinsk site before Kazakhstan became independent. "It was not easy to get permission to close the nuclear site from the Central Committee of Soviet Communist Party," said the President. The author of the article said that Kazakhstan is grateful to those countries that are helping to rehabilitate the Semey region, "however, not all countries realize the danger of nuclear weapons. India, Pakistan, and North Korea still continue to accumulate nuclear warheads. The position of our country is firm: we are determined to fight for a non-nuclear peace and propose creating a global anti-nuclear movement."

16. Pro-government, Russian-language "Express K" lauded Nazarbayev's "historic decision to close the nuclear site and put an end to nuclear tests." According to the author, "Tens of thousands of Semey's citizens came to the meeting holding slogans, such as 'Our president was the first to close a nuclear site! Who will be

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next?', 'Kazakhstan -- territory of peace,' and '21st century without nuclear weapons.'" Nazarbayev said in his remarks, "Nuclear countries should set an example of goodwill and reduce their arsenals! In this we support President Obama's statement (in Prague) about the total elimination of nuclear weapons in all the countries of the world."

AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS GET POSITIVE COVERAGE

17. Pro-government, Russian-language "Izvestiya" also hailed the decision "made personally by Nursultan Nazarbayev" to give up the "world's fourth largest nuclear arsenal. With this act Kazakhstan demonstrated its responsibility for the fate of humanity to the whole world." The author said that the "people of Kazakhstan call on all other countries to join them in a global movement for non-proliferation and destruction of nuclear weapons." Noting that there were foreign guests in attendance, including the U.S. and Russian ambassadors, the author quotes the Ambassador as saying that "in the future his country will do everything possible to reduce nuclear stockpiles." The author concluded that "Russian and American laboratories are planning to research former nuclear test sites to determine which are the most dangerous."

18. "Express K" also singled out the Ambassador's remarks, citing his tip of the hat to the host country, "Kazakhstan is an acknowledged leader in the fight for nuclear disarmament. There is a partnership among Kazakhstan, Russia, and the United States that aims to prevent the remnants of nuclear weapons from falling into the hands of terrorists."

19. Television stations which covered the event specifically noted the Ambassador's praise of the leadership role in non-proliferation played by Kazakhstan and its president.

RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR'S ADDRESS

10. In his address, Russian Ambassador Bocharnikov praised Kazakhstan for setting an example through its renunciation of nuclear weapons and called for full implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to counter new threats and realities. "A consistent package of measures is being developed with the active participation of Kazakhstan to enhance the effectiveness of

the agreement and ensure unconditional fulfillment of commitments by all parties, based on a combination of three fundamental components -- namely, non-proliferation, disarmament, and the peaceful use of nuclear power," he explained. Bocharnikov added that "a significant contribution to disarmament efforts would be the signing of a legally-binding U.S.-Russian agreement on further reduction and limitation of strategic offensive weapons, given that such a reduction is closely linked to the deployment of global anti-missile defense systems."

THE AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS

¶11. In his own remarks, the Ambassador recognized Kazakhstan's leadership on non-proliferation and drew on President Obama's Prague speech outlining U.S. policy to reduce the threat from nuclear weapons and materials. The large crowd loudly applauded after near each paragraph of President Obama's specific proposals. Following is the full text of the Ambassador's address.

BEGIN TEXT

Twenty years ago when the Soviet Union closed the Semei Nuclear Test Site, no one would ever have predicted then that today the President of the independent Republic of Kazakhstan, the Ambassador of the independent Russian Federation, and the Ambassador of the United States would stand together as partners to mark this significant anniversary.

It is very well known around the world that one of the great achievements of Kazakhstan and its president, Nursultan Nazarbayev,

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has been to renounce the nuclear weapons it inherited at independence and to become a leader in nuclear nonproliferation. For that great achievement, we honor President Nazarbayev and his vision of a nuclear-free world.

What is much less well known is the highly successful but quiet partnership among Kazakhstan, the United States, and Russia to ensure that the dangerous remnants at this test site never fall into the hands of terrorists or others who would seek to do evil in the world.

The nuclear laboratories of the United States and Russia have conferred closely, and continue to confer, to identify those specific sites within this larger test-site territory that need to be sealed off from the rest of the world. Beginning in 1996, the government of the United States, in successful partnership with the appropriate agencies of the government of Kazakhstan, and in close consultation with the government of Russia, has worked, and continues to work, to ensure the total security of this site. That work will continue, and will even be accelerated, because it is the policy of U.S. President Barack Obama to work intensively to achieve a nuclear-free world. President Obama announced this visionary policy during a speech in Prague, the Czech Republic, on April 5 this year. I want to quote some of what he said.

"The existence of thousands of nuclear weapons is the most dangerous legacy of the Cold War. No nuclear war was fought between the United States and the Soviet Union, but generations lived with the knowledge that their world could be erased in a single flash of light. Today, the Cold War has disappeared but thousands of those weapons have not. In a strange turn of history, the threat of global nuclear war has gone down, but the risk of a nuclear attack has gone up. More nations have acquired these weapons. Testing has continued. Black market trade in nuclear secrets and nuclear materials abounds. The technology to build a bomb has spread. Terrorists are determined to buy, build or steal one. Our efforts to contain these dangers are centered on a global non-proliferation regime.

"The United States will take concrete steps towards a world without nuclear weapons. To put an end to Cold War thinking, we will reduce the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy, and urge others to do the same.

"To reduce our warheads and stockpiles, we will negotiate a new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with the Russians this year that will be legally binding and sufficiently bold. To achieve a global ban on nuclear testing, my administration will immediately and aggressively pursue U.S. ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. To cut off the building blocks needed for a bomb, the United States will seek a new treaty that verifiably ends the production of fissile materials intended for use in state nuclear weapons.

"We will strengthen the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a basis for cooperation. Countries with nuclear weapons will move towards disarmament, countries without nuclear weapons will not acquire them, and all countries can access peaceful nuclear energy.

"We should build a new framework for civil nuclear cooperation, including an international fuel bank, so that countries can access peaceful power without increasing the risks of proliferation. That must be the right of every nation that renounces nuclear weapons, especially developing countries embarking on peaceful programs.

"Finally, we must ensure that terrorists never acquire a nuclear weapon. This is the most immediate and extreme threat to global security. One terrorist with one nuclear weapon could unleash massive destruction. Al Qaeda has said it seeks a bomb and that it would have no problem with using it. And we know that there is unsecured nuclear material across the globe.

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"So today I am announcing a new international effort to secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the world within four years. We will set new standards, expand our cooperation with Russia, pursue new partnerships to lock down these sensitive materials.

"Human destiny will be what we make of it. Let us honor our past by reaching for a better future. Let us bridge our divisions, build upon our hopes, accept our responsibility to leave this world more prosperous and more peaceful than we found it. Together we can do it."

END TEXT

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